

*“People in the United States and in other Western cultures usually find the idea of eating insects unappealing, but bugs are a normal part of the diet in many countries of the world.*

*Diners had the opportunity to eat an expertly prepared four-course meal made with delectable insects paired with an appropriate cocktail, beer or wine. Our goal was to give them an enjoyable and unusual dining experience while introducing them to a new way of thinking about their food.*

*Based on what I heard at the Bug Banquet and after it, everyone had a good time and people were pleased with the menu and the quality and taste of the food. It was also a good opportunity to let people know that insects are a viable agricultural product and can be part of the solution toward ensuring the future food security of the planet.”*

Molly Keck  
 Extension Program Specialist-  
 Integrated Pest Management

**INSIDE  
 THIS ISSUE:**

Two Join Bexar County Extension Family	2
Juntos Program Stresses Family Involvement	2
What’s for Dinner Tonight?	3
Giving Garden Receives “Double Blessing”	3
Message from the County Director	4
Calendar of Events	4

## Bug Banquet Makes a Unique Culinary Experience

More than 70 people attended the first-ever Bug Banquet presented by the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service in Bexar County to educate people on insects as a food source. Diners were served a four-course meal of unique foods prepared with insect ingredients.

Entomophagy (or the practice of eating of insects as a food source) goes back tens of thousands of years and continues today, said Molly Keck, Extension Program Specialist for Integrated Pest Management.

Dinner was prepared by local chef Jose Cervantes with help from Bexar County 4-H Food Challenge team members. The menu included fire ant queso dip,



candied pear salad greens with roasted mealworms, goat cheese quesadillas with tortillas made with cricket flour, and baked apples with cricket granola. Drinks included a cocktail made with honey produced by bees provided by Extension to the San Antonio Food Bank’s Community Garden to help increase pollination and support Extension vegetable and fruit trials.

Vegetables used for the banquet were harvested from the Children’s Vegetable



Garden, a program conducted by Extension in partnership with the San Antonio Botanical Garden.

Our very own 4-H’er, Reece Moffitt, a recognized violinist at Texas 4-H Roundup, provided entertainment for the event.

Ian Kusch, a 4-H entomology camp participant, was given the opportunity to speak to the diners about his interest in entomology and entomophagy.



## Two Join Bexar County Extension Family



Sam Womble has joined the Bexar County staff of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service, serving as the County Extension Agent-Agriculture/Natural Resources, effective November 16, 2015. Sam received an Associates Degree in Animal Science from Clarendon College and a Bachelor of Science Degree in Animal Science from Texas A&M University. He was a member of the Livestock Judging Team at Clarendon and Texas A&M and was a member of the Live Animal/Meats Evaluation Team at Texas A&M. He began his Extension career in Erath County (Stephenville, TX) in 1998. While there, he completed his Master of Science Degree in Ag Education. He has also served as CEA-Ag/Natural Resource in Victoria County (2000 - 2011) and Bandera County (2011-2015), bringing 19 years of experience.

Sam has a wife, Sarah, who teaches at Champion High School in Boerne. They have three young children: Connor (9), Savana (6), and Lexie (5). In his spare time, Sam enjoys judging livestock shows and participating in the kids' extra-curricular activities.



Angie Gutierrez assumed the County Extension Agent-Family & Consumer Sciences position in Bexar County effective November 23, 2015. Born and raised in San Antonio, Angie received a Bachelor of Arts Degree in 2012 from the University of Incarnate Word (UIW) in Child Studies and is working on completing her Master of Education in Adult Education, through UIW, with a projected Summer-2016 graduation.

Prior to assuming her new position, Angie served on the staff of the Expanded Food & Nutrition Education Program (Bexar County Unit) for over 10 years, working primarily with youth. She taught nutrition education in public, charter, and private schools. Angie brings over 27 years of experience in working with youth, ages ranging from infants to teens.

Angie is the proud mother of a teenage daughter who keeps her busy with band practice, color guard practice and band competition events in high school and is currently a student at Trinity University Upward Bound Program on the weekends.

## Juntos Program Stresses Family Involvement

*"My goal was to make sure parents are aware of their kids' homework assignments and are actively involved in making sure they do their homework. Doing homework helps kids develop their organizational and problem-solving skills and teaches them the self-discipline needed to succeed in higher grade levels.*

*If the kids don't have homework, I urged the parents to get them involved in something else school-related."*

— Ruth Zambrano  
Parent Involvement  
Coordinator  
Harlandale ISD

About 25 families attended the "Making Education a Family Goal" workshop held at Leal Middle School in the Harlandale Independent School District. The event was a collaboration of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service through the Juntos 4-H program and Harlandale ISD. It brought students and parents together to stress the importance of homework, family time and organization.

"Juntos" is the Spanish word meaning "together". The program provides Hispanic students in 8th through 12th grade and their parents the skills, knowledge, and resources to not only keep the kids in school, but also gain access to college. And although it targets Hispanic youth, the program is open to anyone.

At the workshop, each family was

given a "homework toolkit" (spiral notebooks, markers, pens, pencils, erasers, notebook paper, and highlighters), provided by the Parent Involvement Office of Harlandale ISD.





## What's for Dinner Tonight?

More than 100 people attended the Dinner Tonight! Healthy Cooking School held at the YMCA's Y Living Center in southwest San Antonio. The cooking school was part Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service's effort to promote at-home family dining through easy, healthful and economical meal options. It was conducted by Extension in cooperation with the Prairie View A&M University's Cooperative Extension Program, the Better Living for Texans Program, and the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program.

"At-home family dining can do a lot to address many issues related to family cohesion and obesity," said Rosemary Fuentes, Health & Wellness Program Specialist for Bexar

County. "Many people are overwhelmed by menu planning and making healthy, cost-effective meals for themselves and their families. This event gives people the opportunity to see firsthand how easy it can be to prepare healthy meals at home in a short time."

The cooking school featured local chef Jose Cervantes, formerly of Luis' Catering, who showed the audience how to prepare a Tuscan white bean soup and walnut apple salad with goat cheese. As each recipe was being prepared, participants were given samples to taste.

Participants received a Dinner Tonight! cookbook and goodie bag. The unique cookbook contained meal plans and recipes, including entrées, sides, and desserts—perfect for busy

families. Door prize drawings were also held throughout the morning.

If you too are as busy as most and find yourself wondering "what's for dinner tonight", recipes are available via weekly video webcasts at <http://healthyliving.tamu.edu>. In addition, you can sign up for weekly Dinner Tonight! email updates available at <http://dinnertonight.tamu.edu>.



## Giving Garden Receives "Double Blessing"

"Twice blessed" would be an accurate way to describe the Giving Garden at St. John Berchmans Catholic School in San Antonio. The garden, built this spring by students in cooperation with the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service and Bexar County Master Gardeners, was blessed by both a Catholic priest and Native American group during a recent celebration held at the school. Consisting of 10 raised beds, the garden was tended through the summer by a core group of 15 students, who harvested various vegetables prior to the start of the school year. The students were given advice and instruction by Bexar County Master Gardener John Mayer, who also taught from the Learn, Grow, Eat and Go! 4-H curriculum.

"The Giving Garden is part of our Sustainable Communities Project

efforts, which include teaching youth about nutrition and food preparation along with providing them opportunities to learn about science, technology, math and engineering, or STEM, subjects," Melinda Garcia said, the Extension 4-H & Youth Development Program Specialist responsible for the Children, Youth and Families at Risk, or CYFAR, activities in Bexar County. "A USDA grant was received to promote sustainable community efforts in both Bexar and Harris counties, and we chose St. John Berchmans as a location in which to build a garden that would serve the school as well as involve the surrounding community."

Beverley Abbott, principal of St. John Berchmans, said the garden gave students an

opportunity to learn about nature and science, as well as learning important life skills such as how to work responsibly as a team. "We wanted the kids be a part of something that could show them in a practical sense how they might work to sustain themselves in the future," Abbott said. "We would be remiss if we didn't teach them such things."



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**A Message from the County Extension Director**

Ring in the new year brings opportunity for change. A recent quote I read mentioned that sometimes the smallest step in the right direction ends up being the biggest step of your life. It encouraged readers to tiptoe if they must, but to take a step. As such, I encourage each of you to embrace the change you'd like to see in yourself and others. Know that although it may not be easy, it will certainly be worth it.

As we ponder the many resolutions we can choose from, think of your favorite memories, things you're most grateful for, the hardest lesson learned, and what you did that you're most proud of this year. Then, decide on places you'd like to go, ways you can help others, what you'd like to get better at, what you're most looking forward to, and what new things you like to try in the new year. Once you've answered those questions, I have no doubt you will find the motivation to do just what you planned.

Good luck and Happy New Year !

— Nelda Leyba Speller  
County Extension Director

**Calendar of Events**

**DECEMBER**

28—JANUARY 1 Bexar County Junior Livestock Show

**JANUARY**

8,15,22 & 28 Associate Entomologist Certification Prep Course

9 4-H Consumer Decision Making Workshop

12 4-H Veterinary Science Project Group

23 4-H Clothing Workshop

30 2016 Spring Youth Garden Educator Training

**FEBRUARY**

4, 18 4-H Public Speaking Training

6 4-H Dance

11-28 San Antonio Livestock Exposition

12 Spring CEU Course for Structural Pest Control Licenses

27 4-H Photography Workshop

28 Alamo Area Conservation Workshop

For more information about these and other events, please call 210-631-0400 or visit our website: [http:// bexar-tx.tamu.edu](http://bexar-tx.tamu.edu).



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